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marks of acid which may have been added to give it the appearance of age, are about the only clues. Quite as difficult to detect is an inscription which may be copied on an ancient vase or other ancient object which previously bore no inscription, and here also only the recent marks of the chisel or of acids, or some careless oversight of the engraver, as the crowding of the characters, the division of the words, or the shallowness of his lines, betrays his work.

Fortunately for the archæologist, most of the forgeries are still in the hands of the illicit antiquity dealers in Bagdad, and there they are likely to remain. However, the dealer eagerly watches the advent of the stranger, displays his wares, and carefully explains how he dug up this statue at Abu Habba, and how that stone tablet was sent by a friend from Telloh, or that vase was stolen by a workman from the Germans at Babylon. If the stranger is too wise to buy, it is shipped, whenever opportunity may offer, along with some genuine antiquities to London or Paris or Berlin, and there its fate depends upon the shrewdness and training of the archæologist into whose hands it happens to fall.

BAGDAD, August 22, 1904.

A VASE INSCRIPTION FROM WARKA.

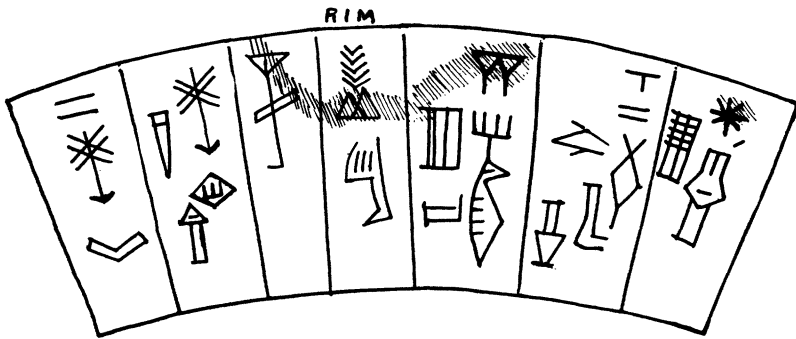
BY EDGAR JAMES BANKS,
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An Arab woman who was recently searching for antiquities at Warka, the ancient Erech, discovered an inscribed bowl-shaped vase of a beautiful greenish-tinted onyx. The vase was sold to a passing Arab for a karan, or eight cents, and finally it came into the possession of a Bagdad collector, who claims that he purchased it for four liras (\$17.60). It stands 10 centimeters high; it is 16.5 in diameter at the top, and 6 at the bottom; its walls average 1 centimeter in thickness. When found, the base was broken off, but it is now fitted to the upper part, forming a perfect specimen of a vase used in the temple service during the fifth millennium B. C.

A small portion of its polished surface near the rim has been cut away to obliterate an inscription which once stood there, yet

traces of a few characters, among them *Lugal Kish*, king of Kish, possibly appear.

By the side of the obliterated inscription is a perfect one of seven lines, written in the most archaic characters. It would appear that the vase was lost to its original owner, possibly through war, and that its later possessor, Lugal-kisal-si, king of Erech, caused the earlier inscription to be erased; upon the birth of a son a new inscription was added, and the vase was presented by the hand of a priest as a votive offering of the newly born child.



Lugal-kisal-si, known to us from a vase inscription of Lugal-kigub-nidudu, which was found at Nippur,¹ ruled at Erech some time before 4000 B. C. Hilprecht (p. 58, n. 3) regards him as the son of Lugal-kigub-nidudu. If this is true, our vase inscription mentions a third generation of this ancient royal family. It may be transliterated and translated as follows:

1 Dingir Urru-líl ²	1 To Urru, ⁵
2 išib A-gíd-ḫa-du ³ ta	2 the priest A-gid-ḫa-du for
3 dumu Lugal-kisal-si	3 the son of Lugal-kisal-si
4 tu-da	4 born of
5 dam ⁴	5 his wife
6 Mu [†] -ḫar-sag-ni	6 Mu-ḫar-sag
7 a-mu-šub.	7 has given (this vase).

BAGDAD, August 20, 1904.

¹ See Hilprecht's *Old Babylonian Inscriptions*, Vol. I, Part II, Plate 37, No. 86, l. 7, and also Plate 42, No. 89.

² Compare IV R. 5, 66 a.

³ Nin-a-gid-ḫa-du is a goddess mentioned in Hilprecht's book (Vol. I, Plate 38, l. 32).

⁴ According to Hilprecht, this form of mu and dam does not appear together in any Nippur inscription (see Part II, p. 34).

⁵ Or, To Urru, by the priest A-gid-ḫa-du, the son of Lugal-kisal-si, born of his wife Mu-ḫar-sag, is (this vase) given.—PRICE.